

Post-Event Summary Report

Name of Event: REALITIES FOR TODAY...VISIONS OF TOMORROW

Date of Event: April 27, 2005

Location of Event: York College, 94-20 Guy R. Brewer Blvd., Jamaica, N.Y. 11451
(Include city and state)

Number of Persons Attending: 260-270

Sponsoring Organization(s): Jamaica Service Program for Older Adults, Inc.

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Please follow this format for each priority area, with the most important listed first.

Please ensure that your organization's name and contact information is provided at the bottom of each page submitted.

HEALTH AND LONG TERM LIVING

Priority Issue #1: Cutbacks in Medicare and Medicaid

There is a lack of qualitative and quantitative information to guide public policy regarding future aging issues such as alternative living arrangements for retirees and the escalating cost of prescription drugs.

Barriers:

- Low income and marginal income older adults cannot meet the escalating cost of assisted living and prescription drugs.
- The Appeal Process for Medicare/Medicaid is too complicated and burdensome for a significant number of older adults.

Proposed Solution(s):

- Federal government needs to develop a national policy and minimum standards for assisted living facilities.
- Fix Medicare by using its purchasing power more effectively to lower prices for prescription drugs.

Priority Issue #2: Simplification of HMOs and Long Term Insurance

Current plans regarding Long Term Insurance issues are complicated and very expensive. The HMO appeals process favors the provider rather than the consumer.

Barriers:

- High cost of Long Term Insurance prevents consumers from coverage at a younger age, although statistics predict a longer lifespan.
- Appeals process for all HMOs is too complicated.

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Solutions:

- Simplify and standardize appeals process for HMOs
- Create policy for tax incentives to purchase Long Term Insurance

SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT

Priority Issue #1: Continuing Education and Training for Volunteers

Increasing number of younger retirees demand alternative volunteer opportunities, business ventures and continuing education

Barriers:

- Limited access for opportunities to engage in business, life-long learning and employment.

Solutions:

- Increase funding to colleges and other education systems to provide opportunities and training for life-long learning.

Priority Issue #2: Transmitting Wisdom to Younger Generations

There is no national policy to promote interdependence among generations.

Barriers:

- Lack of public education regarding strengths and benefits among the generations.

Solutions:

- Increase funding to every level within the education system to foster programs in support of intergenerational collaboration.

PLANNING ALONG THE LIFE SPAN

Priority Issue #1: Social Security

Retain Social Security as the primary source of income for retirees.

Barriers:

- The increased number of new retirees with a decreased number of younger workers paying into the system.

Solution:

- Commitment by federal government to preserve Social Security system with modest changes to address needs of the population.

Priority Issue #2: Financial Education – Planning for the Future

The present 3-prong retirement plan does not adequately cover future generations of retirees.

Barriers:

- Lack of information and education at an earlier age regarding financial planning options.

Solution:

- Increase funding to all levels of public education to increase awareness and training in financial planning.

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Priority Issue #3: Safety-Protecting Ourselves and Our Assets

Increased number of older people are victimized due to factors such as societal changes, technology and mental frailty.

Barriers:

- Lack of trained staff to advocate for victims.
- Lack of education to prevent victimization

Solution:

- Increase funding to provide training at police precincts, law schools and legal clinics.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION**Priority Issue #1: Coordination of Services**

- Fragmentation of services to the elderly and their families.

Barrier:

- Lack of coordination among community agencies serving older adults

Solutions:

- Funding for education, collaboration and training of retirees through use of technology and other outreach efforts.

Priority Issue #2: Caregiver Support

- Increasing number of mature caregivers for family members needing 24 hour care.

Barrier:

- High cost of caring for an older person or raising a grandchild

Solution:

- Create tax incentives for caregivers
- Increase funding for individual home care/respite.

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